GOVERNMENT'S DIGITAL INITIATIVES FOR EDUCATION PM E-VIDYA: EXPLORING ITS IMPLEMENTATION AT SCHOOL LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

With the goal of giving all students access to high-quality education, the Indian government launched the PM e-VIDYA project for digital education in order to change education and successfully implement NEP2020. The success of these programs depends on whether they reach the intended recipients, even while they are offering great educational possibilities. The purpose of this study is to investigate how schools are incorporating PM e-VIDYA, the government's digital education initiative, to enhance students' academic progress. The findings revealed that schools have all the necessary resources for integrating these, but though they are successfully doing so, widespread adoption among students, teachers, and schools is crucial to maximizing their benefits and demonstrating their positive impact on education.

KEYWORDS: Digital Education, Government's Digital Education Initiatives, PM e-VIDYA, DIKSHA, SWAYAM MOOCs, Swayam Prabha TV Channels, ICT, School Education

INTRODUCTION

"For the students of our country, the information and communication technology offer a magical opportunity to rapidly upgrade to a 21st-century learning environment which must not be missed and the same will be ensured to reach the nooks by the Education departments of all States/UTs and the Ministry of Education in exemplifying the quality and its reach on digital learning for a better tomorrow to the students of our country"

(India Report Digital Education,2021)

Education is the process of uplifting and upgrading the societies. In the earlier times only, few have the privileged to avail good education, who have enough resources but with the advent to technology, the quality education started reaching to unreached. In India in 2015 our honorable prime minister started digital India campaign with a vision to accelerate digital literacy, further more PM e-VIDYA platform launched with a mission to provide access to quality education to around 25 crore school going children across the country.PM e -VIDYA platform is hosting Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) portal and mobile app created by MHRD, Govt. of India ,which is a store house of large number of eBooks and e-Contents created by States/UTs and National level organizations. On PM e-VIDYA Swayam Prabha 12 Dedicated TV channels one each from Class 1 to 12 are telecasting the educational programs. On PM e-VIDYA students may also get certificates by enrolling in different courses on Swayam MOOCs. As well as PM e -VIDYA is providing access to quality education with radio programs and podcasts to remotely located learners, where internet facility and digital devices is not appropriate. On this platform there is also content for children with special needs especially for the visually and hearing-impaired learners and those who are preparing for competitive examinations. Overall, it is a comprehensive platform for digital education.

Need and significance of the present study:
Government of India has taken also initiatives for inclusive, equitable and accessible quality education through technology as PM e -VIDYA platform which includes DIKSHA, SWAYAM MOOCs, e-Pathshala, NISTHA, Vidyadaan etc. These are intended to provide quality education to all. Haider & Altaf(2022) explored that DIKSHA is the most popular platform among teachers for self paced professional development programes. Ghosh (2022) revealed that Diksha app is widely used by English language teachers and students, but it has some limitations. Users face issues like hanging, frequent updates, and technical errors Teachers recommend for more MCQ and interactive worksheets. Despite these challenges, the app's use leads to positive changes in classrooms, with increased interaction, better test scores, and active student participation. To enhance student engagement, awareness campaigns through ads, workshops, and meetings are suggested. There persists a substantial section of the population whose digital access is highly limited (NEP2020). Ghosh (2022) revealed that has some limitations, users face issues like hanging, frequent updates, and technical errors. Accessibility to users, monitoring on participation, digital skills ,relevance to lifelong learning and flexible learning etc are challenges and issues associated with digital education(Rofe,2023).Teachers are unaware of vidyadaan and are not interested in digital initiatives, still there is lack of training (Tathe& Jaybhaye(2021),Tiwari &Malik (2022).For their effective implementation at ground level it is necessary to analyse their awareness, usage and impact. Majumdar & Mondal (2019) SWAYAM is viewed as a tool for self-actualization that offers chances for lifelong learning. The SWAYAM platform was created especially to help working professionals, college dropouts, and students from remote or

underdeveloped areas. Decuypere, Grimaldi & Landr (2021) discussed that the picture of education is changing with digital platforms. Thus, there is an immense need to know how these platforms taking part in the assembling of education, connecting facts, actors, epistemologies, techniques and values into novel educational forms. How much these initiatives are catering to the needs of all learners? How schools are familiar with these initiatives and how much schools are incorporating these for catering students. To answer these question, it is imperative to analyse the familiarity and usage of governments' digital initiatives in school. Investigator has not traced any study which is assessing the implementation of Government Digital Initiatives PM e-VIDYA in school education. Moreover NEP 2020 is also calling for carefully designed and appropriately scaled pilot studies to determine how the benefits of online/ digital education can be reaped while addressing or mitigating the downsides.

Research is required to gauge user adoption and awareness. This study would help to assess whether the platform is reaching its intended beneficiaries, improving equitable access to educational resources. This information is crucial for society as it helps and gauge the effectiveness of digital initiatives in transforming education and empowering learners. This study would identify challenges faced by users in using the Digital technology platform. The outcome of this study would reveal the adoption of Governments' Digital initiative PM e- VIDYA by the school for achieving the goal of inclusive, accessible, and quality education through technology by minimizing digital divide. The outcome of the study would be helpful in achieving the goals of Digital India initiative and SDG4 India Indices formulation of various annual reports. The outcome of the study would be helpful in NEP2020 implementation, Niti Aayog, School education department, Ministry of education for digitalization of education. Overall, the proposed study would provide policymakers with valuable information and insights to shape policies and strategies for digital education in India. This study would help to assess whether the platform is reaching its intended beneficiaries, improving access to educational resources.

Objective: The objectives of the present study are:
1. To study the digital infrastructure of schools for the effective implementation of Government digital initiatives for education (PM e-VIDYA Platform).
2. To study the integration of specific Government digital initiatives for education (under PM e-VIDYA Platform) at school level.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Research Design: Descriptive Survey method has been adopted for the present study.

Population & Sample: Population of the present study comprises of all the school located in Asansol; Sample of the study comprised of 21 CBSE affiliated school situated in Asansol West Bengal. Simple random technique adopted for selection of sample.

Tools and Techniques: Data has collected with check list and Open-ended questionnaire.

Procedure of data collection and Analysis: Data has been collected from 21 CBSE affiliated school, situated in Asansol, West Bengal. Data has been collected with check list and open and closed ended questionnaire. Check list was seeking the information about the availability of equipment and resources in school and open and closed ended questionnaire was design to collect the information about the integration of specific Government digital initiatives for education (under PM e-VIDYA Platform) at school level. The researcher visited the school and contacted the principal of school. After developing rapport with the principal researcher clear the objective of her research and collected required information with the help of open-ended questionnaire. Collected data has been analysed and tabulated. The data has been analysed with statistical techniques mean and standard deviation has been calculated.

Findings of the Study: The objective of the study is to analyse the effective implementation of Government digital initiatives for education (PM e-VIDYA Platform) at school level. The data has been analysed and the findings of the study are:

Objective 1: To study the digital infrastructure of schools for the effective implementation of Government digital initiatives for education (PM e-VIDYA Platform).

Hypothesis: All the school are having well equipped digital infrastructure for the effective implementation of Government digital initiatives for education (PM e-VIDYA Platform).

The check list revels the information about the availability of equipment and digital resources in school for the effective implementation of Government digital initiatives for education (PM e-VIDYA Platform)

S.No.	Statement	Yes	No
		N (21)	
1	Dedicated computer lab or technology room in school	100%	-
2	Computers/laptops available in school	100%	-
3	Smart board in all classrooms	16.66%	83.33%
4	Reliable internet connection	100%	-
5	Digital educational resources (e-resources, e-books, educational software)	-	100%
6	Technical support for technological troubleshoots	100%	-

Table 1: Digital infrastructure of schools

With the analysis of data, it was found that all schools(100%) are having dedicated computer lab or ICT lab in their school, and it also interpreted that computers and laptops are available in all schools(100%) for the use of students. It is common in all schools (100%) that smart boards are not available in all classrooms, whereas these are mounted in few classrooms.

Further it was found that all schools (100%) the computers / laptops are having reliable internet connections. Results showed that in all schools (100%)' computers are not equipped with e-books, e-learning resources and educational software. It is very overwhelming that in all schools (100%) persons are available for technical support in technological troubleshoots.

Objective 2: To study the integration of specific Government digital initiatives for education (under PM e-VIDYA Platform) at school level.

Hypothesis: All schools are effectively integrating Government digital initiatives for education (PM e-VIDYA Platform).

Under this dimension data has collected about the provision of implementation of digital education initiatives at school level. Open and closed ended questionnaire reveals the integration of Government digital initiatives for education (PM e-VIDYA Platform) at school level. This questionnaire collected data under following dimensions-

1. **Familiarity and integration of DIKSHA platform in teaching learning:** Under this dimension researcher is seeking how much schools are familiar with DIKSHA platform and to what extent it is implementing it at school level.
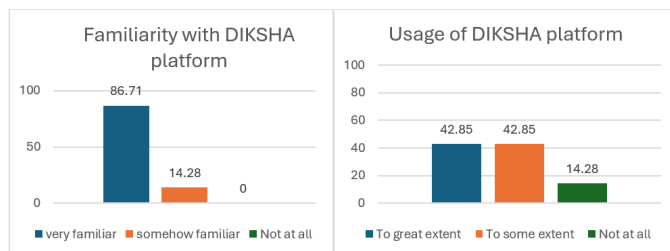

Fig 1. Familiarity and integration of DIKSHA platform in teaching learning

Findings of the present study revealed that a great number of schools (86.71%) are very familiar with DIKSHA platform and few (14.28%) are somehow familiar, and not a single school responded about the unawareness about DIKSHA platform. About the integration of DIKSHA platform at school level results revealed that about (42.85%) are using DIKSHA platform to great extent and same (42.85%) are using it to some extent, and some (14.28%) are not using DIKSHA platform in teaching learning process.

2. **Adoption of DIKSHA platform by school for academic success, personal growth and development of learners:**
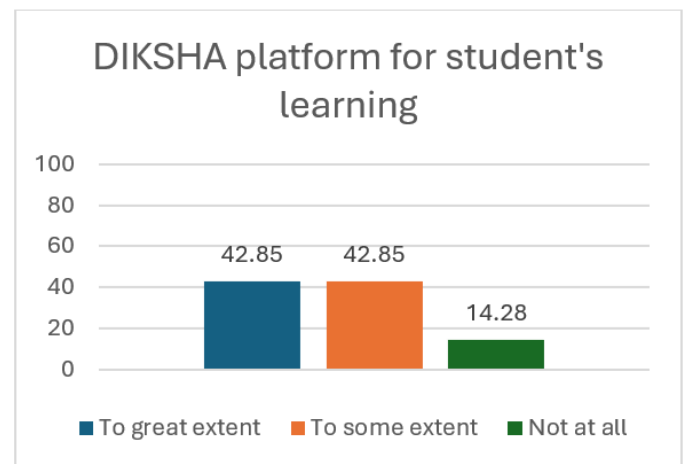

Fig 2. Adoption of DIKSHA platform for student's learning

The above data deciphering that about 80-85% schools are adopting DIKSHA platform from great extent to some extent for the academic success, personal growth and development of learners, whereas only some (14.28%) are not using DIKSHA platform for the student's development and growth.

3. **Familiarity and integration of Swayam MOOCs platform in school education:**
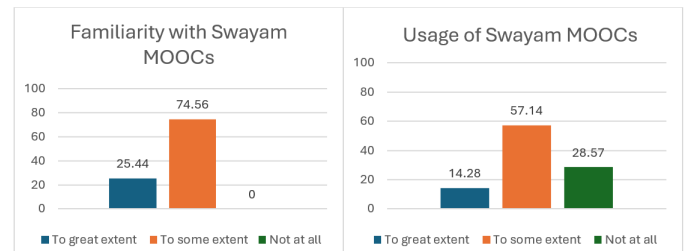

Fig 3. Familiarity and integration of Swayam MOOCs platform in teaching learning

The collected data revealed that all schools are familiar with Swayam MOOCs, (74.56%) are familiar to some extent, and only (25.44%) are familiar to great extent. Further data also revealed that (71.42%) schools are encouraging students to enrol in courses on Swayam for enhancement of competencies and getting extra knowledge, out of which (57.14%) are encouraging students to great extent and (14.28%) are encouraging to some extent. Results also revealed that (28.57%) are not encouraging their students for the enrolment in Swayam MOOCs courses.

4. **Familiarity and integration of Swayam Prabha TV channel platform in school education:**
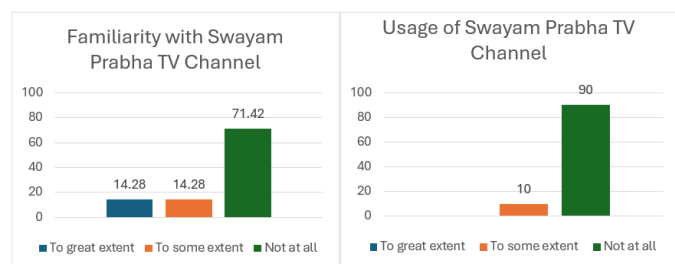

Fig 4. Familiarity and integration of Swayam Prabha TV channels in teaching learning

The results of the study revealed that a great number of schools (71.42%) are not familiar with Swayam Prabha TV channels, only few (14.28%) are familiar to great extent, and some (14.28%) are familiar to some extent. When it comes to implementation of Swayam Prabha TV channel for the academic growth of students (90%) of schools denied that they are not sharing TV channel programs with students, only (10%) schools are encouraging students to watch educational programs on Swayam Prabha TV channel and implementing in classrooms.

5. **Familiarity and integration of CBSE Shiksha Vani Podcast platform in school education:**
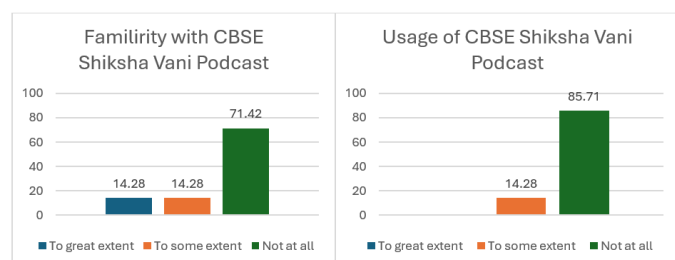

Fig 5. Familiarity and integration of CBSE Shiksha Vani Podcast in teaching learning

From the collected data it was found that a great number of schools (71.42%) are not familiar with CBSE Shiksha Vani Podcast only (14.28%) are familiar to great extent and same are familiar to great extent.For about the integration of CBSE Shiksha Vani Podcast in teaching learning process very few only (14.28%) are employing to some extent and a great number (85.71%) are not employing at all.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results revealed that in CBSE affiliated schools dedicated ICT labs are available with reliable internet connections. In most of the schools' smart boards are mounted in only selected classrooms. In most of the schools' digital resources like e-books, e-learning resources and educational software are not uploaded in computer systems. In all schools' teachers are able to integrate technology in teaching learning process, even those who are not tech-savvy, technical support is available for any trouble shoot. Additionally, for the implementation of government digital education initiative PM e-VIDYA,

it was discovered that schools are well acquainted with DIKSHA platform, and many are also implementing in their classrooms to support students' academic progress as part of the government's digital education initiative, PM e-VIDYA. The primary draws on DIKSHA are the energised textbooks, lesson plans, explanation materials, and practice question sets. However, Kumar & Kumari (2023) found that teachers are comfortable in the use of DIKSHA app and using this during the process of teaching and learning and participating in training programs, but teachers are not encouraging students for the use of DIKSHA energised textbooks. Overall, DIKSHA is playing a crucial role in bridging the digital divide and making digitally sound society. The findings also showed that while many schools are aware of MOOCs on the Swayam platform, not all of them are, and they occasionally encourage students to enrol in Swayam courses to improve their learning. Majumder (2019) The Government of India launched the excellent SWAYAM program, which will benefit the next generation more.

The findings are startling: nearly all schools do not encourage students to examine the content on Swayam Prabha TV channels for learning or topic review, and a large majority of schools are unfamiliar with the channels. The findings also showed that while a small percentage of CBSE schools are aware of the Shiksha Vani Podcast, the majority do not support students' use of it to improve their learning.

Based on the findings, it is determined that while schools are using the DIKSHA platform for teaching and learning, there is a great need to spread awareness about PM e-VIDYA's other digital education efforts among educators, students, and schools. in order for everyone to profit from the free educational materials offered on the PM e-VIDYA platform.

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